

22 JUNE 2018

PHILL STANLEY
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
SUMMERSET GROUP HOLDINGS LTD
BY E-MAIL

Dear Phill

HUTT CITY COUNCIL REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION (S.92 RMA), 32A
HATHAWAY AVENUE, BOULCOTT

1. Thank you for providing me with the Council's s.92 request for further information, and also for providing me with the various updated plans and additional photo-simulations prepared by Summerset.
2. I can confirm that having reviewed the additional plans and material, none of my conclusions in relation to the application have changed.
3. You have also asked me to comment in relation to the following three matters:
 - a. Security gates at the village entrance;
 - b. A visual contour of 75m-100m around the site; and
 - c. 3D elevated perspective views of the proposal.

Security gates

4. In my assessment I mistakenly understood that no security gates were proposed. It has been confirmed to me that gates are proposed.
5. My preference is that no gates be provided, however in light of the village accessway remaining in private ownership and that it would be likely to attract extremely low volumes of general through traffic in the night time (if any), I would not oppose the proposed gates provided that:
 - a. The mechanism does not create a noise nuisance for users of adjacent residential properties;
 - b. They were open, at least, between the hours of 0630 – 2030 daily;
 - c. They were designed to include an artistic aesthetic design and appearance; and

- d. Were no taller than 1.5m.

75m – 100m visual contour

6. In my assessment I concluded that, in respect of the “adjoining neighbourhood” (i.e. the residential area, but not the golf course):

“The neighbourhood is effectively flat and, in my view, it is very unlikely that public views of the proposal will occur beyond 75m distance of the site. Beyond that distance, other than people having an awareness that a large retirement village may be in the neighbourhood, I do not consider the proposal will have any material effect on the coherence of the adjoining neighbourhood or its amenity values.”

And later:

Overall, I consider that the proposal will sit adequately within its context. Although for a very different scale and type of development than is the predominant norm, the village will have limited direct visibility and will beyond 75m-100m from the site have effectively no perceptible bulk, scale or form effects on the existing neighbourhood’s coherence.

7. The reason for the 75m – 100m range was in acknowledgement that the Boulcott School is within 75m of the site, but its size and in turn frontage with Boulcott Street, will mean views through the school site (as it is currently configured) to the site will be possible from beyond a 75m distance.
8. Mr Gjerde for the Council has asked for substantiation of this. I refer to **Appendix 1**, which includes a 75m and 100m distance contour from the site.
9. The contours demonstrate that the public opportunities for views to the site beyond 100m are from Boulcott Street outside the school; the corner of Fry and Troon Streets, the cul-de-sac end of St Andrews Grove, and Military Road. The tallest building proposed is up to 18.5m tall (Block B). Setting aside additional setbacks within the site’s boundaries to Building B, a building 18.5m tall viewed from 100m setback has the equivalent height as a 3.5m tall building set back 10m from the viewer. Based on my analysis of those public view points beyond 100m from the site, I consider that with the exception of Boulcott Street outside the school, such existing structures do exist at or within 10m from the obvious viewpoint. In other words, unless from 100m back from the site there exists a clear line of sight to the proposal, intervening buildings and trees will screen all or most of the proposed buildings. In terms of Boulcott Street, I do not consider that this will be lasting or even necessarily permanent view given that the school may in time reconfigure buildings. In any event, the setback from Boulcott Street to Building B, including the on-site setback from the school boundary, will be sufficient to make it a non-dominant, non-conspicuous part of the view.
10. Based on the above, my site visits, the heights of the proposed buildings and their setbacks from the 75m / 100m contours, intervening existing buildings on private sites, and the potential for taller buildings (i.e. up to 8m in height) provided for as permitted activities in the District Plan, I remain comfortable that my conclusions as to the proposal’s impact on the neighbourhood and its coherence are sound.

3d elevated perspectives

11. Mr Gjerde for the Council has requested a number of 3D elevated perspectives of the proposal. I did not consider that such images would be necessary or useful to assess the proposal when I requested photo-simulations and I consider that this request should be refused for the following reasons:
- a. The requested views are not standard industry practice.
 - b. Showing images from an unrealistic viewpoint (for instance 20m up into the air) does not help express a relevant understanding of a proposal. To the contrary, standard industry practice, as has been in my view followed to date, is to model such 3D views as photo-simulations wherever possible, based on typical human eye level. Where only parts of a proposed development will be visible from such individual viewpoints, that is materially relevant to the extent to which the development will (or will not) result in adverse effects or other planning issues from that viewpoint.
 - c. In my experience where “bird’s eye” 3D elevated views have been proposed by an applicant, they are typically ‘marketing’ type images of little analytical merit. In any event to be useful as assessment tools they cannot be simple artistic representations but require calibration as accurate photo-simulations, including what is shown in the foreground and background, and including adjacent buildings and vegetation. This tends to make such images time consuming and costly to produce.
 - d. In my view the combination of elevations, plans, and photo-simulations are sufficient to allow an understanding of the proposal and its effects.

Please feel welcome to contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of the above further.

Yours sincerely,



IAN MUNRO

urban planner and urban designer

B.Plan (Hons); M.Plan (Hons); M.Arch [Urban Design] (Hons); M.EnvLS (Hons); M.EngSt [Transport] (Hons); MNZPI; Independent Hearing Commissioner

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APPENDIX 1 – 75m distance contour around the subject site
Image source: Hutt Council ortho-corrected aerial photography database, 2018.

